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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 559  
By McNally

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor the good people of East Tennessee for their generous gift of the Freedom Engine to the New York City Fire Department.

WHEREAS, on the morning of September 11, 2001, millions of Americans were stunned by the brutal terrorist attack on the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in Lower Manhattan and on the Pentagon outside of Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, in the minutes after the hijacked planes struck the World Trade Center, hundreds of uniformed officers of the New York City Police Department, emergency medical technicians, physicians, nurses, first responders and the Fire Department of New York, converged on the stricken buildings; firemen rushed up smoke-filled stairwells to aid those in need, moving against a tide of building tenants streaming down the stairwells in an attempt to escape; and

WHEREAS, moments later, weakened by the intense heat of burning aviation fuel, the buildings' superstructures collapsed, driving the structures down into a pile of rubble, killing

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most of those still in the buildings and many outside; more than three hundred New York City firefighters were killed in the collapse; and

WHEREAS, the unflagging courage and heroic actions of the Fire Department of New York, the New York and Port Authority Police Departments, and the responding emergency medical personnel during those terrible hours inspired all who witnessed their actions even as they mourned the staggering loss of life; and

WHEREAS, the good people of East Tennessee, moved by the heroism of the New York City Fire Department and saddened by their tragic losses, raised more than \$940,000 to purchase a 95-foot tower ladder fire truck, named the Freedom Engine, for the New York City Fire Department; the fire truck, to be used by FDNY Ladder Company 14 based in Harlem, will help the fire department replenish their firefighting fleet, which was heavily damaged in the aftermath of the attacks; and

WHEREAS, the Freedom Engine, which was specifically built by Seagrave Fire Apparatus and Aerialscope Inc. to meet the unique firefighting needs of New York City, bears a plaque which states, "From the people of East Tennessee to the people of New York City. We will not forget Sept. 11"; and

WHEREAS, the Freedom Engine campaign was benevolently sponsored by First Tennessee Bank, the Knoxville *News-Sentinel*, the City of Knoxville, WBIR-TV, the Knoxville Fire Department, Rural/Metro, and Journal Broadcasting; and

WHEREAS, before its delivery to New York City, the brand new state-of-the-art fire truck was driven from Richmond, Virginia to East Tennessee, where it made stops across East Tennessee in celebration of the hard work and generosity that made the fire truck possible; and

WHEREAS, the Freedom Engine's first stop in East Tennessee was at the Alpha Primary School in Morristown, where the students of Thelma Metzger's first grade class raised \$48 for the Freedom Engine fund by doing chores for their parents and grandparents, for which they were paid no more than twenty-five cents; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Metzger's first grade class composed and sang a song to honor the occasion, "You are the Freedom Engine, You keep rolling along, You are the Freedom Engine, May you always be strong, We are so proud to send you, And so proud for what you stand, You are the Freedom Engine, Of this mighty land!"; and

WHEREAS, the Freedom Engine traveled to Knoxville; in a noon ceremony broadcast live by WBIR-TV, Channel 10, and simulcast by the Journal Broadcast Group, the people of East Tennessee presented a symbolic key to two firefighters from FDNY Ladder Company 14; with the fire truck expected to go into service in March, a presentation and dedication ceremony is being planned in New York; and

WHEREAS, in response to the great valor shown by the New York City Fire Department on September 11, the people of East Tennessee united together to aid those who, in spite of tremendous loss, continue to daily place their lives on the line to protect their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of East Tennessee are wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the "Volunteer State," and they should be recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby recognize and honor the many citizens and organizations of East Tennessee who made possible the presentation of the Freedom Engine to the New York City Fire Department, commend their extraordinary fund-raising efforts, praise their hard work, diligence, and self-sacrifice, and express our appreciation for their patriotism and open-heartedness in these difficult times.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.